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TORRINGTON
RURAL DISTRICT
1958.

REPORTS
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER, 1958



GREAT TORRINGTON:
Printed by COPP & SON, "Osborne Printing Works,"
4, Well Street.

STAFF.

PART TIME OFFICER:

Medical Officer of Health—

Dr. E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

WHOLE TIME OFFICERS:

Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor—

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector—

C. A. KERSWILL, Cert. S.I.E.J.B.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
TORRINGTON.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Torrington
Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

We have pleasure in presenting our ANNUAL REPORTS
for the year ended 31st December, 1958.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.,

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

Torrington Rural District.

✻ 1958 ✻

General Statistics.

Area (Acres) ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	79,803
Population (R.G.) ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,160
Number of Inhabited Houses	..	...	...	...	...	...	2,386
Rateable Value	...	...	...	..	...	..	£38,344
Sum realised by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£164

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

Live Births ... Male 23, Female 22, Total 45.

79 others were born outside the area.

Birth Rate per 1000 of estimated Population .. 17.3

Deaths ... Male 36, Female 39, Total 75.

Death Rate per 1000 of estimated Resident Population 10.5

Some of these died in Hospitals outside the area.

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health.

General Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Nursing.

The District is provided with Midwives and Nurses under the National Health Scheme.

Hospitals.

The District is accommodated by the Hospitals at Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple and Exeter which are administered by a local Regional Board. These are not nearly large enough for modern conditions.

Clinics.

These work efficiently through the County Council and other authorities.

Isolation Hospitals.

The majority of our patients are received by the Bideford Isolation Hospital. Special facilities are made for smallpox, etc.

Tuberculosis is admirably looked after by the Barnstaple Clinic and the disease is declining in numbers.

Ambulance Services.

These are satisfactory.

Laboratory Services.

These are available and function well, mostly at Exeter and Barnstaple.

Maternity Services.

These are provided by Midwives and Hospitals. Baby Clinics are very popular. I suggest that normal cases should be encouraged to use the Home Service available as a larger grant is now made for such cases.

Schools.

Sanitation and water are still not up to standard but are improving.

T.T. milk is supplied where possible, otherwise Pasteurised or tablets may be issued. Now, with school dinners, is the milk ration really necessary in all cases?

Dairies and Cowsheds.

These are definitely improving. A very few cases of mastitis among cattle have been reported.

Venereal Disease.

There is very little, and what there is, is imported from greater wage earning centres. There is an excellent clinic at Barnstaple.

Infestation.

This is very small amongst locals and the school nurses stop it quickly.

Housing.

There are many houses not up to standard. It is hoped that persons in these houses will be put into Council Houses. The dilapidated houses could then be reconditioned before being allowed to be tenanted again. Repairs of older houses is a major problem. Possibly more smaller Council Houses should be built for the old persons and smaller families. They should be built where main water is or will be shortly available and preferably in villages rather than remote spots.

More two or three roomed houses are necessary for the elderly.

Mental Health and Deficiencies.

The County looks after this very conscientiously, and also the deaf mutes and blind. A little more stern discipline in and out of schools might help to stop some naughty teenagers beginning their life of petty crime. It seems to be forgotten that the example of one might stop 99 starting.

Water.

It is quite impossible for the area to be adequately supplied with wells and private reservoirs but the improvement in supply is increasing. Some villages have got main water and others will as soon as possible. In these days of shippens, indoor lavatories, baths, modern schools, washing such things as milk bottles and clothes more often, all the area should be supplied by the North Devon Water Board.

Drainage.

This is rather inadequate as a whole, but villages are being provided with main drainage as funds allow.

Immunisation against Diphtheria, etc.

The results are very satisfactory. Immunisation must be kept up to date. Immunisation against whooping cough and poliomyelitis will be available. The value of smallpox vaccination is not fully appreciated.

It is very necessary to keep up the Diphtheria immunisation.

Infectious Diseases.

During the year the following were reported:—

Whooping Cough	0 cases.	Tuberculosis	3 cases.
Scarlet Fever	4 cases.	Measles	95 cases.
Pneumonia	11 cases.	Dysentery	3 cases.
Erysipelas	1 cases.	Diphtheria	0 cases.
Smallpox	0 cases.	Poliomyelitis	0 cases.

Annual Report of Public Health Inspector.

DETAILS OF INSPECTIONS.

Dwellings inspected under Housing Acts	...	...	47
Dwellings inspected under Public Health Acts	...	31	
Re-inspections under Housing Acts	...	...	94
Re-inspections under Public Health Acts	...	...	48
Keeping of Animals	...	...	5
Offensive accumulations	...	...	4
Inquiries into cases of Infectious Disease	..	...	4
Number of Rooms disinfected	...	..	3
Visits to Factories	...	..	19
„ „ Bakehouses	...	...	8
„ „ Schools	...	...	6
Food Inspections (other than meat)	...	...	5
Visits to Food Preparing Premises (other than meat)			18
Number of Water Samples	...	...	7
Building Inspections under Bye-laws	...	...	124
Visits to Council Housing Sites	...	...	192
Defective Drains	...	...	37
Drains examined	...	...	41
Plans investigated	...	...	58
Petroleum inspections	...	...	21
Dirty Houses	...	...	3
Farm Water Supplies	...	...	22
Miscellaneous	...	...	26
Sewage Works	...	...	157
Improvement Grants	...	...	115

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 and 1948.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of			M/c line No. (7)
			Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	1	57	27	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies (a) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement Order, 1938†)	2	—	—	—	—	2
(b) Others... ..	3	—	—	—	—	3
(iii) Other premises under the Act‡ (excluding outworkers' premises)	4	—	—	—	—	4
TOTAL		57	27	NIL	NIL	

2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	M/c line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were	M/c line No.
		Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	

want of cleanliness (S.1)	...	...	...	4	4	5	5	5
Overcrowding (S.2)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(a) Insufficient	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	10
(b) Unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(c) Not separate for sexes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTAL	...	...	...	5	5	NIL	NIL	NIL
								13

OUTWORK—Sections (110 and 111).

Nature of Work	M/c line No.	Section 110			Section 111			M/c line No.
		No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c) (3)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (4)	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists (5)	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises (6)	Notices served (7)	Prosecutions (8)	
(1)	(2)							(9)
Wearing { Making, etc. ...	13	32	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	13
apparel { Cleaning and washing ...	14							14

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects	...	...	...	37
(2) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	—
(3) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	..	...	...	31

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action	28
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:

A. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local Authority	19
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Improvements carried out and nuisances abated:—

<i>External</i>	<i>No. of Premises.</i>					
Walls repaired	22
Roofs repaired	7
Guttering repaired	8
Downspouts repaired	11
Chimneys repaired	4
Water supply laid on into houses	17
New pumps provided	4
Wells cleansed	1
Well steinings repaired	1
New lengths drain laid	39
Defective drains repaired	18
New inspection chambers	21
Septic tanks repaired	4
New septic tanks	8
New gullies	11
New W.C.'s	22
Water supply laid on to W.C.'s	22
W.C. cisterns renewed	8
New washing accommodation	1
Outbuildings repaired	3

<i>Internal</i>						<i>No. of Premises.</i>
Walls replastered	...	...	...	...	...	8
Ceilings replastered	...	...	...	...	...	10
Windows repaired	...	...	...	...	...	11
Doors repaired	...	...	...	...	...	8
Floors repaired	...	...	...	...	...	9
Cooking appliances repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	13
New sinks	...	...	...	...	...	8
New Sculleries	...	...	...	...	...	1
Baths installed	...	...	...	...	...	14
Food storage improved	...	...	...	...	...	8
Stairs repaired	...	...	...	...	...	3
Hot water systems fixed	...	...	...	...	...	9

New Housing Accommodation.

Number of new houses erected by local authority	...	Nil
„ „ new houses erected by private enterprise...	...	1

Council Housing Programme.

There were no new Council houses under construction during 1958. Two bungalows and two houses are planned to commence building in the new year at Winkleigh and it is intended to erect a number of one bedroom bungalows for old people in various villages. The Council have also acquired 8 old houses in the village of Taddipport and extensive reconditioning is in progress.

18 Improvement Grants were made during the year totalling £6,485. This brings the total number of grants made by the Council to 96 covering an amount of £28,963. The annual amount allocated for grants by the Council to cover loan charges and repayments of principal is limited to the product of a penny rate. The Council's record in this respect compares very favourably with other rural districts.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

A monthly collection of refuse is carried out by contract and is disposed of at three refuse tips, situated at Winkleigh, Merton and Roborough. It is proposed to commence a fortnightly collection in 1959.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The villages of Winkleigh, Shebbear, Sheepwash and Taddipport are served by modern disposal plants. Schemes for St. Giles-in-the-Wood, Kingscott and Roborough have been approved and work will commence

early in 1959. Ministry approval is awaited for Petrockstowe and Merton. It is hoped to speed up the preparation and construction of schemes in 1959.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Mains extensions were carried out by the North Devon Water Board during the year to Ashreigney and Huntshaw. Extensions to Roborough and Yarnscombe are contemplated in 1959.

The following new connections were made during the year :—

86—Domestic.

81—Trade.

The total number of premises now connected to the mains is 1020 domestic and 415 trade, of which 262 are farmhouses. Approximately 59% of houses in the district are now supplied with main water.

RODENT DESTRUCTION.

In connection with Torrington Borough Council a full time Operator is shared by the two authorities

The following work was carried out in the Rural District during the year :—

Number of Survey calls made :

Private Houses	...	...	1789
Refuse Tips and Sewage Works...			47
Farms	...	..	278
Business Premises	...	...	68

Number of Premises treated :—

Private Houses	...	...	287
Refuse Tips and Sewage Works	...		14
Farms	...	...	65
Business Premises	...	...	4

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are no offensive trades in this district.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Slaughtering.

There are three licensed slaughter houses in the district including a large factory type at Winkleigh. It is difficult to maintain 100% meat inspection as this necessitates the presence of an Inspector for six days a week including Saturdays, Sundays & Bank Holidays. In my opinion there ought to be some National restriction on the times of killing so that meat inspection can be more efficiently and economically organised. The majority of the meat killed in the district is “exported” to other areas, mainly London.

TABLE A.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

Figures in Brackets are for 1957.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	453 (119)	42 (8)	73 (5)	23187 (2516)	11773 (686)	—
Number inspected	453 (117)	42 (8)	73 (5)	23187 (2511)	11773 (681)	—
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci						
Whole carcasses con- demned	3	5	3	120	14	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	70 (9)	20 (2)	—	1442 (94)	382 (23)	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tub- erculosis and Cysticerci	16.1 (7.7)	59.5 (25)	4.1	6.7 (3.7)	3.3 (3.3)	—
Tuberculosis only						
Whole carcasses con- demned	—	1	—	—	2	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	1 (7)	17	—	—	307 (72)	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	.2 (6.0)	42.9	—	—	2.5 (10.5)	—
Cysticercosis						
Carcases of which some part or Organ was con- demned	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refriger- ation	1	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE B.

Summary of Meat condemnations with cause and weight.

Food Condemned	Weight in lbs.
Due to Tuberculosis :	
1 Ox Carcase and Organs	345
2 Pig Carcases and Organs	207
Portions of 1 Ox	12
Portions of 307 Pigs	3446
	4010 lbs.
	<i>i.e.</i> 1 ton 15 cwts. 3 qrs. 16 lbs.
Due to diseases other than Tuberculosis :	
Parts of 125 Oxen	5322
Parts of 1562 Sheep	10159
Parts of 699 Pigs... ..	6422
Parts of 3 Calves	152
	22055 lbs.
	<i>i.e.</i> 9 tons 16 cwts. 3 qrs. 19 lbs.

Condemned meat was disposed of through trade channels after staining with naphthalene green.

TABLE C.

Other Foodstuffs.

NIL.

FOOD PREMISES.

The following is a list of food premises in the district :—

Grocery and General Stores	...	...	37
Bakers	...	...	4
Butchers	...	...	5
Fishmongers	...	...	1
Public Houses	...	...	15
Other Hotels and Cafés	...	...	2
			64

Seventeen Premises are registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for the sale of prepacked ice-cream and two for the manufacture and sale of fish and chips. No ice-cream is manufactured in the district. 18 visits to food premises were made during the year.

MILK AND DAIRIES ACTS AND ORDERS.

There are no designated milk bottling establishments in the district.

PETROLEUM LICENCES.

31 petroleum storage licences were issued during the year.

SLAUGHTERING LICENCES.

11 licences were issued during the year to slaughtermen.

PLANS.

58 plans were submitted during the year, 55 were approved and 3 disapproved.

All plans were considered by the Council's Planning Committee before submission to the Divisional Planning Committee of the Devon County Council

I attended the monthly meetings of the Divisional Planning Committee.

STAFF.

In conclusion I should like to pay tribute to Mr. Kerswill for the conscientious way in which he has carried out meat inspection. I would also like to thank your Clerk, Mr. B. W. Leatt, for his close co-operation which is always very helpful.



